

**Security Council**

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Letter dated 16 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

In connection with the bulletin issued by the Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs regarding the decrease in agricultural production in 2015 and its negative impact on the humanitarian situation in the Sudan, please find attached a press release issued by the national Humanitarian Aid Commission. The press release gives a detailed account of the exact humanitarian situation in the Sudan.

I should be grateful if you would have the present letter and its annex circulated as a document of the Security Council.

(Signed) Omer Dahab Fadl Mohamed
Permanent Representative

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Annex to the letter dated 16 March 2016 from the Permanent Representative of the Sudan to the United Nations addressed to the President of the Security Council

[Original: Arabic]

Press statement

Humanitarian Aid Commission denies that there is famine in the country

The United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA) has issued a bulletin stating that, according to the Famine Early Warning Systems Network, agricultural production had declined in 2015 and that the price of agricultural goods had risen. According to the bulletin, it was expected that four million persons would be classified as being in phase 3 (crisis) of the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification, adding that the humanitarian situation in the areas of Blue Nile, Southern Kordofan and Jebel Marra was deteriorating.

The Humanitarian Aid Commission would like to set out the following facts:

1. OCHA is not the agency that is authorized to issue or adopt reports regarding production levels or the nutrition situation in the Sudan.
2. No consultations were held with the Humanitarian Aid Commission and the Food Security Technical Secretariat, the Government agencies responsible for nutrition and humanitarian issues. OCHA has continued to issue information and statistics regarding the humanitarian situation in the Sudan without consulting the competent Government agencies, despite repeated reminders from the Humanitarian Aid Commission.
3. The OCHA bulletin did not objectively and faithfully convey the information contained in the report that it referenced. Instead, specific paragraphs were chosen from the report and taken out of context. Meanwhile, the bulletin failed to mention the paragraph which states that food supplies were adequate and stable. Given that this is the essence of the report, it raises questions as to the purpose of the above-mentioned distortion.
4. The OCHA bulletin states that areas in Blue Nile and Southern Kordofan will be more affected. This is not the case, because the amount of rainfall in those areas was above average in 2015. The suffering has been caused by the Sudan People's Liberation Movement-North, which has continued to block the entry of the assistance called for by the tripartite proposal and Security Council resolution 2046 (2012).
5. Several surveys were conducted over the past six months, including the preliminary survey to estimate crop production (September 2015); the joint survey to estimate crop production carried out with the Food and Agriculture Organization, the World Food Programme and the early warning centre funded by assistance from the United States (November 2015); the aerial survey conducted by the Ministry of Agriculture (February 2016); and the final crop survey (February 2016). All of those surveys confirmed that there was a surplus, despite the weak figures for autumn. The surveys also identified specific areas where action would be required during critical periods.

6. In addition to the above-mentioned surveys, the Integrated Food Security Phase Classification report, which was prepared with the participation of the United Nations and the Government, indicated that certain areas were vulnerable and set out the actions required. However, like the surveys, it confirmed that there was a surplus.

7. Based on available information, the Supreme Council for Food Security took several measures to stabilize prices and address vulnerabilities, including:

(a) Grain stocks in targeted areas were increased to a total of 350,000 *jawals*.

(b) Large quantities of wheat were imported.

(c) The reach of the social protection networks of the Ministry of Welfare and Social Security was increased.

(d) Measures were taken to protect vulnerable groups through the Humanitarian Aid Commission, United Nations agencies and other organizations.

The Humanitarian Aid Commission reaffirms that the food situation in the country is stable. Statements that four million people are threatened by famine are not based on accurate or objective information and do not serve the interests of the Sudan. In fact, they could cause anxiety among civilians and lead to price rises and hoarding. The Humanitarian Aid Commission therefore calls on all partners to work in accordance with the principles of impartiality, transparency and independence, and to refrain from using humanitarian work to serve political agendas.

Khartoum, 15 March 2016